

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 OES-07 AID-05 EB-08 SP-02
AGRE-00 NSC-05 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 H-01 IO-13 ICA-11 /089 W
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R 181516Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2331

C O N F I D E N T I A L USE CARACAS 4548

FOR SEC VANCE AND ADMIN GILLIGAN FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SPOP
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S ROLE IN POPULATION GROWTH AND FOOD PRODUCTION
PROBLEMS.

REF: STATE 107370

1. AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL I WILL CONVEY TO GOV OFFICIALS
WHEN OPPORTUNITIES ARISE DEPARTMENT'S CONCERN OVER INTER-RELATED
PROBLEMS OF POPULATION GROWTH AND LIMITED WORLD FOOD
SUPPLY. SINCE THE GOV IS NOT A RECIPIENT OF U.S. AID OUR LEVERAGE
IS LIMITED. NEVERTHELESS, VENEZUELAN ADMINISTRATION IS
CONCERNED OVER ITS DEFICIT FOOD SITUATION AND HAS PROCLAIMED A POLICY
OF EXPANDING FOOD PRODUCTION. THE VENEZUELAN FARM SECTOR HAS BEEN
THE BENEFICIARY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM U.S. AGRICULTURAL
EXPERTS FROM BOTH THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR (REIMBURSABLE DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM) AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR. DURING 1977 THE VENEZUELAN FARM
SECTOR RECORDED THE LARGEST AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT TO DATE.

2. THE PEREZ GOVERNMENT FROM THE BEGINNING HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO
A POPULATION CONTROL POLICY ALTHOUGH ITS IMPLEMENTATION HAS NOT BEEN
FULLY EFFECTIVE. PRESIDENT PEREZ IN HIS ANNUAL ADDRESS TO CONGRESS
(CARACAS A-26) EXPRESSED SATISFACTION IN THE DECLINE OF THE
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VENEZUELAN BIRTHRATE IN 1977 FROM 36.8 PER THOUSAND TO 35 PER
THOUSAND. WHILE THE 1977 RATE STILL IS EXTREMELY HIGH AND MOST
VENEZUELAN DO NOT SENSE ANY URGENCY OF POPULATION PRESSURE, THIS
SMALL DECLINE OFFERS SOME ENCOURAGEMENT THAT VENEZUELAN ARE BEGINNING

TO TAKE FAMILY PLANNING MORE SERIOUSLY. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN
CURRENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN HAVE NOT EMPHASIZED FAMILY PLANNING

ALTHOUGH ACCION DEMOCRATICA PARTY CANDIDATE LUIS PINERUA ORDAZ
HAS PUBLICLY STATED HIS SUPPORT FOR A POSITIVE FAMILY PLANNING
PROGRAM.

3. I WILL REPORT TO YOU ANY SIGNIFICANT CONVERSATIONS WITH GOV
OFFICIALS ON FOOD AND POPULATION PROBLEMS. AT THIS POINT
I DO NOT HAVE ANY SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF U.S. PROGRAMS.
VAKY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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